

Message Text

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46

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 EA-11 IO-14 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00

XMB-07 OPIC-12 SP-03 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01

NSC-07 SS-20 STR-08 CEA-02 L-03 H-03 GSA-02 INT-08

FEA-02 FPC-01 PRS-01 PA-04 USIA-15 DRC-01 /234 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6449

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

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AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

SANTO DOMINGO 158

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMCONSUL BELIZE

AMCONSUL PARAMRIBO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT OF SPAIN 1223

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EIND, ENRG, EMIN, TD, XL

SUBJECT: BAUXITE: TRINIDAD PLANS ALUMINUM SMELTER AND
PARTICIPATION IN CARIBBEAN BAUXITE COMPLEX

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REF: STATE 103965; POS 1072

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER WILLIAMS ANNOUNCED MAY 23 PLANS TO BUILD AN ALUMINUM SMELTER IN TRINIDAD AND TO FORM AN INTEGRATED REGIONAL BAUXITE COMPLEX, BOTH PROJECTS INVOLVING THE GOVERNMENTS OF GUYANA, JAMAICA, TRINIDAD, AND --POSSIBLY--SURINAM. HE POINTEDLY NOTED THAT THIS ACTION COMES AT A TIME WHEN THE JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN IMPORTANT STEPS WITH REGARD TO MULTINATIONAL ALUMINUM COMPANIES OPERATING IN THAT COUNTRY. THIS ANNOUNCEMENT, TOGETHER WITH JUNE 7 MEETING OF PM'S WILLIAMS, BURNHAM AND MANLEY, IS PROBABLY TIMED TO PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF REGIONAL ENDORSEMENT OF JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT'S MOVES. END SUMMARY.

1. IN A SHORT TELEVISED SPEECH EVENING OF MAY 23, PRIME MINISTER ERIC WILLIAMS ANNOUNCED THAT PRIME MINISTERS OF JAMAICA AND GUYANA WILL MEET WITH HIM IN TRINIDAD ON JUNE 7 FOR THE FORMAL INAUGURATION OF IMPORTANT ALUMINUM/BAUXITE COMPLEXES. REFERRING TO HIS TALK WITH PM MANLEY IN KINGSTON WHEN ENROUTE BACK TO TRINIDAD FROM US ON MAY 21, HE SAID THAT JAMAICA WILL NOW PARTICIPATE IN TRINIDAD-GUYANA TALKS ABOUT A PROPOSED ALUMINUM SMELTER TO BE BUILT IN TRINIDAD (POS 1072). ACCORDING TO THE PRIME MINISTER, THIS PROJECT WHEN RAISED BY HIM FOUR YEARS AGO ALSO INCLUDED SURINAM, AND "THIS ASPECT IS BEING PURSUED." WILLIAMS ALSO SAID THAT AMOCO TRINIDAD HAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO SOME SORT OF LIMITED PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT, SUBJECT TO TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND THE ASSENT OF THE OTHER GOVERNMENTS.

2. THE PRIME MINISTER OFFERED EVEN FEWER DETAILS ABOUT THE OTHER PROJECT, EXCEPT TO SAY THAT TRINIDAD'S NATURAL GAS RESOURCES WOULD FINANCE ITS PARTICIPATION IN AN "INTEGRATED REGIONAL BAUXITE COMPLEX," APPARENTLY ENCOMPASSING BOTH PRODUCTION AND MARKETING. HE POINTEDLY NOTED THAT THIS MOVE TOWARD SIGNIFICANT NEW ASPECTS OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION COMES AT A TIME WHEN THE JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN STEPS TO DEAL WITH FOREIGN ALUMINUM COMPANIES OPERATING THERE, AND SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE JAMAICAN SITUATION IN A "FRATERNAL CONTEXT" WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF OPEC, UN SECGEN WALDHEIM AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS DURING HIS TRIP TO NEW YORK LAST WEEK.
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3. COMMENT: THIS PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT DOES LITTLE MORE THAN DRAW ATTENTION TO A NUMBER OF LONG-DISCUSSED (BUT STILL VERY TENTATIVE) PROJECTS. THE ALUMINUM SMELTER PRESUMABLY WOULD USE ELECTRICITY GENERATED BY NATURAL GAS FROM AMOCO'S EXTENSIVE FIELDS, WHILE THE BAUXITE REFINERY WOULD BE LOCATED ELSEWHERE. (TRINIDAD IS NOW A POINT OF TRANSSHIPMENT FOR A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF BAUXITE.) AS FAR AS THIS EMBASSY KNOWS, JOINT PLANS

FOR BAUXITE PRODUCTION AND/OR MARKETING HAVE NOT YET BEEN
EXTENSIVELY DISCUSSED BY GUYANA, JAMAICA AND TRINIDAD. WE SUSPECT
THAT THE TIMING OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT, AS WELL AS THE FORTHCOMING
MEETING OF PRIME MINISTERS, MAY WELL BE DESIGNED TO PROVIDE
PUBLIC EVIDENCE OF REGIONAL ENDORSEMENT OF THE JAMAICAN
GOVERNMENT'S RECENT ACTIONS REGARDING BAUXITE. (STATE 103965)
MILLER

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